

Knowledge Management

An 8-Point Primer

January 2014

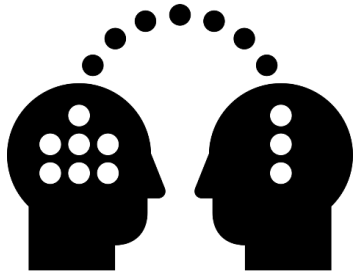
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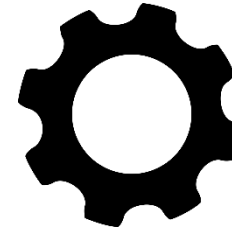
The Knowledge Management 8-Point Primer



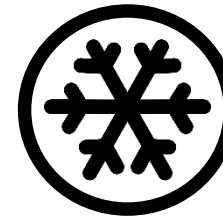
What is
Knowledge
Management?



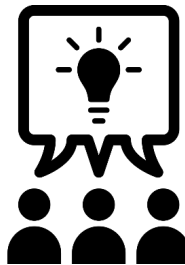
Indicators of
KM Challenges



The
Knowledge
Lifecycle



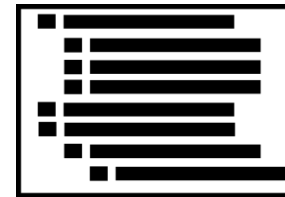
Every
Organization is
Unique



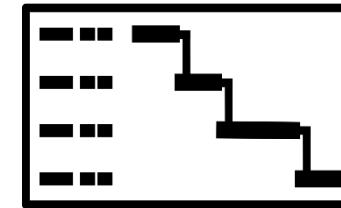
Social Side to
Knowledge
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KM
& Technology



Metadata &
Taxonomies



KM
Program
Development

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1st Edition

Introduction

The Clobridge Consulting Knowledge Management Primer

About the Primer

The Knowledge Management 8-Point Primer is the first in a series of short resources and materials designed to introduce key concepts related to knowledge management, information management, and open knowledge.

Sign up for the Clobridge Consulting Newsletter to be the first to know as in-depth articles and resources are published. <http://www.clobridgeconsulting.com/newsletter>

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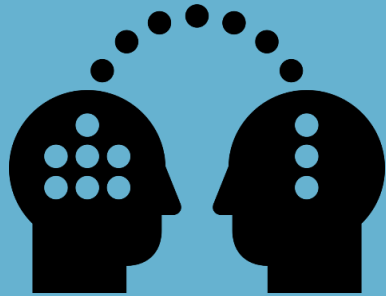
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What is Knowledge Management?

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In today's increasingly complex digital environment, it is critical for organizations of all kinds to make the most of their internal knowledge in order to operate efficiently and effectively, offer the best possible services, and meet stakeholders' needs.

Knowledge Management is the practice of capturing, sharing, adopting, absorbing, and re-using critical knowledge throughout an organization – in consistent, systematic ways.

Through Knowledge Management, we emphasize the systematic adoption of knowledge by individuals and departments and across geographic and functional silos in order to support strategic goals. For example, some organizations take up Knowledge Management to:

Spark innovation and creativity	Adapt, enhance, build on existing knowledge to develop new products or offer new services
Reduce operational waste	Cut down on time spent reinventing the wheel, duplicating processes, wasting resources across silos
Faster onboarding process	For knowledge-based organizations, onboarding time can easily last from 6-18 months. How can this time be shortened for organizational advantage?
Capture and apply critical knowledge	As organizations grow and evolve over time, it is important to understand what works and why in order to replicate successes and best practices, particularly during times of rapid growth or change
Capture institutional memory	Staff turnover and retirements can often cause gaps in organizational knowledge. How can we capture institutional memory before it is lost?

2



Indicators of KM Challenges

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We don't know who does what across silos

As long as no one leaves, we're ok.

Lots of this knowledge is in one person's head and nowhere else.

We're repeating the same mistakes again and again...

We don't ever have time to reflect on what we've learned

We wouldn't be able to recreate the magic that's behind [our department, our product, our service] if we had to start from scratch

The thing that keeps me up at night is worrying about what happens if the one person who knows all about X leaves...

It's hard to know if something has been done before – so we end up wasting time redoing each other's work

We need to do a better job harnessing all of the knowledge, skills, and expertise of our staff

You don't even know what you don't know.

I can't find what I'm looking for within our Intranet or on the shared drives.

Our culture rewards "information hoarding" – how do we change that to encourage sharing?

③

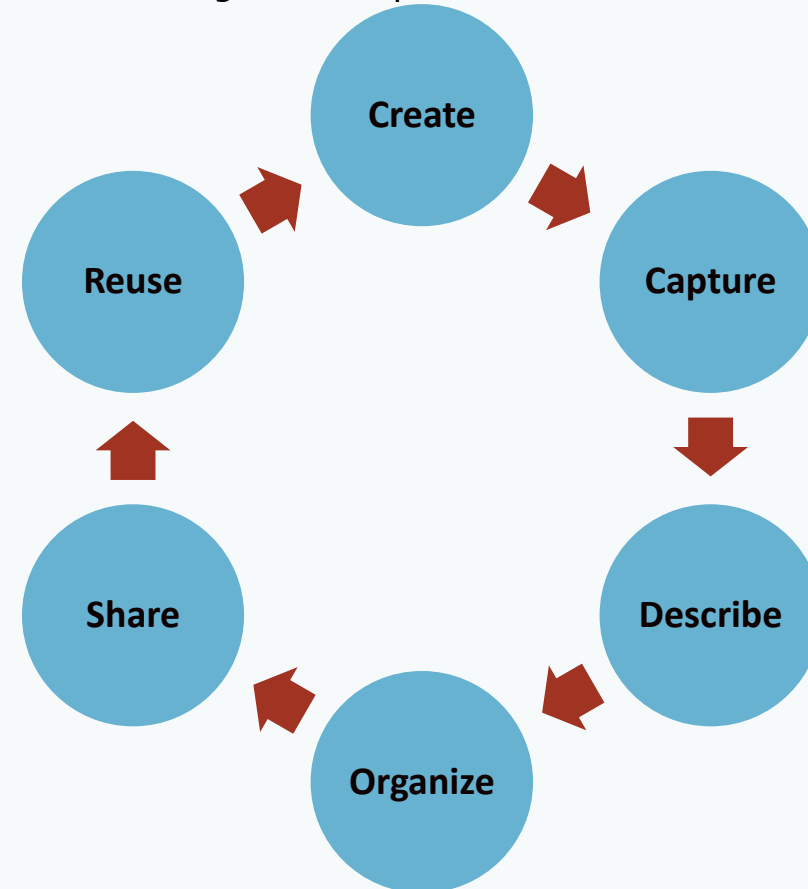


The Knowledge Lifecycle

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Knowledge Management emphasizes consistent, systematic ways to foster **all aspects of the knowledge lifecycle**, although the emphasis is on re-use.

Capturing, describing, organizing, and sharing knowledge are all necessary precursors which make knowledge re-use possible.



Support all elements of the knowledge lifecycle *through formalized, systematic Knowledge Management practices*

④



Unique Approach for Every Organization

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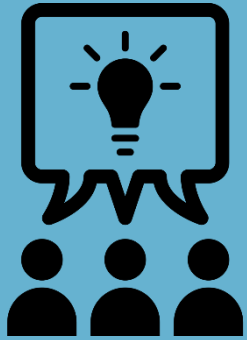
There is not a one-size-fits-all solution to Knowledge Management.



In order to be successful, an organization's approach to KM must be embedded into its fabric – and therefore must be closely connected to organizational culture, behaviors, values, strategy, business, stakeholder needs, and other aspects of what makes an organization unique.

Even so, it can be helpful for organizations to develop their approach to Knowledge Management on a strong framework rooted in KM theory and best practices.

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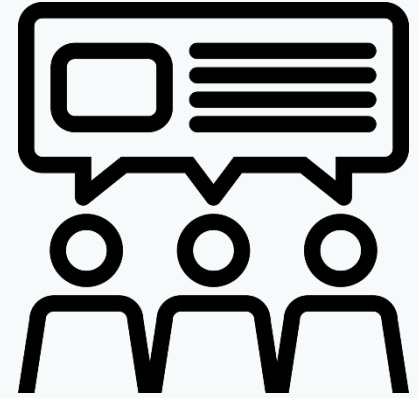
The Social Side of Knowledge Sharing

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Aspects of knowledge sharing are inherently social and encourage groups to collaborate and work together in new ways.

Knowledge Management:

"We're better together."



Encourage the social side of knowledge sharing in order to:

- Spark innovation and creativity
- Foster inclusiveness: different perspectives, different opinions, different ideas, different voices
- Improve and strengthen connections between organizational silos
- Improve and strengthen connections between individuals and the organization
- Build trust and transparency
- Nurture contributions from all corners of the organization, from staff at all levels
- Encourage use of new technology and platforms in a safe environment

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Technology to Enable Elements of KM

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Appropriate adoption of technology

Technology makes a big difference in Knowledge Management efforts and can help support knowledge capture, knowledge sharing, and knowledge re-use.

But technology should never drive a Knowledge Management strategy.



CONNECT

Make it easy for people to connect to each other across silos, geographic boundaries, cross-functional teams.



CURATE

Use digital curation techniques to highlight and showcase research, trends, accomplishments, and types of business intelligence at the enterprise level.



CAPTURE

Embed everyday processes into a system that easily, seamlessly, automatically captures and archives types of knowledge assets.



ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

Promote anytime, anyplace learning, exchange, and collaboration. Devise training and ongoing professional development opportunities that promote point-of-need learning.



SELF-SERVICE TOOLS

Embed knowledge into self-service tools such as knowledge bases to let people connect to the knowledge they need without requiring intermediaries.



SEAMLESSNESS

By using technology, seamlessly incorporate knowledge capture & sharing into everyday processes.



Metadata & Taxonomies

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Within the Knowledge Management context, metadata – particularly metadata in the form of user-assigned tags and taxonomy terms – is key in helping connect people to the data, information, and knowledge which they need.

Taxonomies, Tags, and Metadata

Metadata:

Data about data – e.g. keywords, descriptions, abstracts, author details, creation date.

Taxonomy:

A structure for organizing and codifying content for a particular organization, company, or body of knowledge. Taxonomies consist of pre-defined, consistent taxonomic terms which are arranged either in hierarchical relationships or grouped together in facets of related categories.

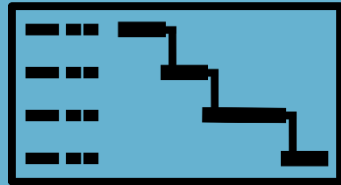
Tags:

User-assigned words or phrases. Also referred to as free tags or folksonomies.

Making explicit knowledge findable and discoverable

Search algorithms in content management systems such as SharePoint, Drupal, WordPress, and IBM Connections draw upon taxonomies and metadata to influence search results. However, outdated taxonomies, over-reliance on user-tags, and taxonomies/tags that do not match search behavior are all common problems which inhibit the findability of knowledge stored within repositories and content management systems.

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KM Program Development

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Developing a Knowledge Management Program

For organizations striving to enhance their KM capabilities, we recommend the following process:

1

Assessment

Undertake a full assessment of the organization's current KM environment, practices, and processes.

2

Strategy Development

Chart a course for the future: establish goals and objectives, align KM with organizational strategies and priorities.

3

Tactics Development

Determine ways to get from the current state to the future state via an integrated set of KM tactics, initiatives, and an implementation roadmap.

4

Implementation

Begin to implement new tactics, initiatives, activities, and ways of working to integrate good KM practices into the fabric of the organization or department.

5

Long-Term Sustainability

Review, assess, and refine KM tactics and the course of action as needed to continue to build up and enhance progress with KM.

For Knowledge Management to be successful, it must be closely aligned with organizational priorities, culture, and structure – in short, it must be embedded into the fabric of the organization.

KM is not a one-time fix, but rather a holistic approach to making the most of organizational knowledge.

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